

THE CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LIBRARIES AND PUBLISHING IN THE ERA OF "NEW UZBEKISTAN"

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Library and information activities

Abstract: *In the era of "New Uzbekistan," libraries and publishing play a pivotal role in shaping the cultural and educational landscape of the country. As Uzbekistan undergoes socio-economic reforms and modernization efforts, these sectors contribute significantly to fostering national identity, promoting literacy, and enhancing access to knowledge. This paper explores how libraries and publishing serve as key instruments in supporting educational development, preserving cultural heritage, and enabling societal progress. It highlights government initiatives aimed at digital transformation, expanding literary production, and promoting reading culture among all age groups. Ultimately, libraries and publishing in "New Uzbekistan" symbolize the country's aspirations toward sustainable development, cultural renaissance, and global integration.*

Keywords: *New Uzbekistan, libraries, publishing, cultural heritage, education, literacy, digital transformation, national identity*

Since the declaration of the "New Uzbekistan" era by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Uzbekistan has embarked on a broad agenda of reforms designed to modernize the country's socio-political and economic spheres. Central to these reforms is a renewed focus on culture and education, which are considered foundational pillars for national development. Libraries and publishing, as carriers of knowledge and culture, have assumed heightened significance in this context. They are not only custodians of the nation's literary and historical heritage but also active agents facilitating educational advancement and societal progress.

In the past, libraries in Uzbekistan primarily functioned as repositories of printed materials, while publishing was tightly controlled under Soviet policies. However, the new era emphasizes openness, innovation, and inclusivity, prompting a transformation of these sectors. Modern libraries are evolving into dynamic centers that integrate digital technologies, offer community programs, and provide equitable access to information. Similarly, the publishing industry is expanding its scope, embracing both traditional and digital formats to meet the demands of diverse readers.[1]

This paper investigates the cultural and educational significance of libraries and publishing in the "New Uzbekistan" framework. It analyzes how these sectors contribute to promoting literacy, nurturing intellectual growth, and preserving cultural identity. Additionally, the paper discusses government-led initiatives aimed at supporting literary production, improving library infrastructure, and encouraging public engagement with reading and learning. Understanding the role of libraries and publishing in this



MODERN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND INNOVATIVE TEACHING SOLUTIONS

transformative era offers insights into Uzbekistan's broader developmental goals and its path towards a knowledge-based society.

In the "New Uzbekistan" era, libraries have transcended their traditional roles and are increasingly recognized as cultural and educational hubs. They provide access to a wide range of resources, including books, digital archives, audiovisual materials, and online databases. Modernization efforts have equipped many libraries with advanced technological infrastructure, allowing users to access electronic catalogs and digital collections. This digital transformation enhances accessibility, especially for remote and underserved communities, fostering inclusive education. Libraries also organize cultural events, literary festivals, and educational workshops that promote reading habits and cultural awareness. These activities strengthen community bonds and contribute to the preservation of Uzbek language and traditions. Through partnerships with educational institutions, libraries support lifelong learning and provide valuable resources for students, researchers, and the general public.

Publishing in "New Uzbekistan" has witnessed remarkable growth, with increased output and diversification of genres. Government policies encourage the publication of books that reflect national history, culture, and values, as well as contemporary scientific and educational materials. The emphasis on producing children's and youth literature ensures the development of literacy from an early age. Moreover, the publishing sector is adapting to digital trends by producing e-books and online content, making literature more accessible and appealing to younger, tech-savvy generations. This expansion supports educational reforms by providing updated textbooks and reference materials that align with modern curricula.[3]

The government plays a proactive role in promoting libraries and publishing through legislative support, financial incentives, and infrastructure development. Programs that distribute free books to schools and public libraries encourage reading and support educational equity. Tax exemptions for publishing houses and grants for authors stimulate creative and intellectual output. National campaigns celebrate reading culture, including events linked to International Literacy Day and the Day of National Writers. Such initiatives raise public awareness about the importance of literature and knowledge in personal and national development.

Libraries and publishing also serve as guardians of Uzbekistan's rich cultural heritage. They collect, preserve, and disseminate manuscripts, historical documents, and folk literature that embody the country's identity. Digitization projects protect these materials from deterioration and make them accessible to researchers and the public worldwide, supporting cultural diplomacy and scholarly exchange.

The era of "New Uzbekistan" marks a significant turning point for the country's cultural and educational development, with libraries and publishing at the forefront of this transformation. These sectors have evolved beyond their traditional roles to become vital instruments for fostering literacy, promoting lifelong learning, and preserving national identity. By embracing modernization and digital technologies, Uzbekistan is

MODERN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND INNOVATIVE TEACHING SOLUTIONS

enhancing access to knowledge and bridging educational gaps across urban and rural areas. Government support through targeted policies and initiatives has created an enabling environment for publishing growth and library modernization. The distribution of educational literature and cultural materials contributes to an informed, culturally aware citizenry capable of active participation in the country's development. Additionally, libraries' role as community centers facilitates cultural engagement and supports educational programs that nurture creativity and critical thinking. Preserving and promoting Uzbekistan's cultural heritage through digitization and publication ensures that the nation's rich literary traditions continue to inspire future generations. This cultural continuity reinforces a sense of identity and pride, essential for societal cohesion in a rapidly changing world. Looking forward, challenges such as enhancing digital infrastructure, improving user experience, and expanding outreach remain priorities. Continued investment and innovation will be critical to maximizing the impact of libraries and publishing on Uzbekistan's educational and cultural landscape.

Ultimately, libraries and publishing in "New Uzbekistan" symbolize the country's aspirations toward a knowledge-based economy, cultural renaissance, and global integration. Their development reflects a broader commitment to empowering citizens, fostering intellectual growth, and celebrating the rich tapestry of Uzbek culture in the 21st century.

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